

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1720

INFO USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 MADRID 3018

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, SP

SUBJ: SPANISH POSITION IN BASE NEGOTIATIONS

REF: A) STATE 91776 B) IR 1 661 0059 75, AFOSI, TORREJON AB

1. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

ASSESSMENT REQUESTED IN REFTEL IS PROVIDED IN GREATER DETAIL BEGINNING WITH PARAGRAPH 2. HERE IS ESSENCE OF OUR CONCLUSIONS AS TO WHAT MAY BE BASIC ELEMENTS OF FINAL SPANISH DEMANDS:

A. RECOGNITION BY NATO IN SOME FORM OF SPANISH CONTRIBUTION. PREFERABLY THIS WOULD INCLUDE SPECIFIC TIE IN, BUT NOT FULL MEMBERSHIP. SPANISH THINKING ON MODALITIES OF SUCH RECOGNITION, INCLUDING OPTION OF COMBINED COMMAND, AND ON DEGREE OF LATITUDE IN THEIR BARGAINING POSITION ON THIS POINT HAS STILL NOT CRYSTALIZED.

B. EVEN WITH SATISFACTION OF BASIC SPANISH NEEDS ON NATO RECOGNITION, WE BELIEVE SOME SCALING DOWN OF MOST POLITICALLY SENSITIVE ASPECTS OF US PRESENCE WILL STILL BE SOUGHT. MOST VULNERABLE ARE TANKERS AT TORREJON AND NUCLEAR PRESENCE AT ROTA. REMOVAL OF TANKERS TO ANOTHER SPANISH BASE WOULD PROBABLY SUFFICE AS PALLIATIVE AS FAR AS TORREJON IS CONCERNED. OPTIMUM ARRANGEMENT FOR SPANISH WOULD BE CONVERSION OF TORREJON

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TO STANDBY STATUS WHERE USAF PRESENCE WOULD BE MINIMAL BUT

SUFFICIENT TO JUSTIFY USAF ABSORPTION OF MOST OF O AND M COSTS FOR SAF. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, ULTIMATELY SPANISH WOULD GO FOR OPTION OF REDUCTION, IN FORM OF REMOVAL OF TANKERS, RATHER THAN FOR OUTRIGHT DEACTIVATION AT THIS TIME, WHICH WOULD PROVE COSTLY TO SAF. SPANISH WOULD PROBABLY AGREE TO PERMIT CONTINUATION OF SSBN'S AT ROTA, BUT ON CONDITION THAT WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO DISCERNIBLY PHASEOUT PERIOD, PERHAPS TO BE COMPLETED BY END OF NEW AGREEMENT OR SHORTLY THEREAFTER.

C. ASSUMING THAT NO SATISFACTION GAINED ON NATO RECOGNITION OR THAT ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS SUCH AS COMBINED COMMAND CANNOT BE SATISFACTORILY WORKED OUT, SPANISH MAY INSIST ON MORE RAPID REDUCTION OF NUCLEAR PRESENCE AT ROTA, STANDBY STATUS OR DEACTIVATION FOR TORREJON AND LIMITATION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY AT ZARAGOZA. THE EXTENT AND PACE OF THESE REDUCTIONS, HOWEVER, MAY VARY WITH THE SIZE OF MATERIEL QUID WE ARE ABLE TO OFFER.

D. WHILE SIZE OF SPANISH MATERIEL QUID EXPECTATIONS TO SOME EXTENT IS FUNCTION OF DEGREE OF SPANISH SATISFACTION ON FOREGOING ISSUES, WE BELIEVE THAT THEY WILL SEEK SUBSTANTIAL LEVEL OF QUID WHATEVER OUTCOME OF OTHER BARGAINING POINTS. THEIR FIRST PRIORITY WOULD BE ACQUISITION OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT ON FAVORABLE TERMS, WITH PROVISIONS OF US ARMS TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SECOND. QUID PRICE WE WOULD BE EXPECTED TO PAY WILL RISE RELATIVE TO OUR INABILITY TO SATISFY SPANISH POLITICAL OBJECTIVES, THOUGH SAME QUID EXPECTATIONS MAY NOT DROP PROPORTIONATELY TO US SUCCESS IN SATISFYING THOSE POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. END SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.

2. IN CONSIDERING LIKELY SPANISH OBJECTIVES IN CURRENT TALKS, WE SHOULD REVIEW WHAT WE THINK ARE FUNDAMENTAL SPANISH ASSUMPTIONS AND PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THEIR POSITION IN RELATION TO U.S. AND NATO AND WHAT THEY FEEL TO BE MAJOR IMPERATIVES.

3. WHILE THEY SMACK OF CONVENTIONAL WISDOM, WE CONSIDER THAT SPANISH VIEW NEGOTIATIONS IN LIGHT FOLLOWING PERCEPTION AND ASSUMPTIONS:

A. SPAIN IS NOW AT ITS MAXIMUM POINT OF STRATEGIC VALUE IN
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RECENT HISTORY FIRST TO US AND TO LESSER EXTENT TO NATO BECAUSE OF (1) GENERAL MEDITERRANEAN INSTABILITY AND DECREASING RELIABILITY OF NATO PARTNERS IN EASTERN MEDITERRANENA; (2) UNCERTAINTY ABOUT PORTUGAL'S FUTURE AND ABOUT CONTINUED ACCESS TO AZORES BASES; (3) INCREASED SOVIET PRESENCE IN WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND MIDDLE ATLANTIC.

B. SPAIN STEADILY MORE ATTRACTIVE TO NATO ON PRACTICAL GROUNDS

AS PROSPECTIVE CONTRIBUTOR TO ALLIANCE AS IT HAS PROVEN ECONOMIC STRENGTH AND STABILITY AND INCREASING MILITARY POTENTIAL AT TIME WHEN CONTRIBUTION OF SOME FORMER NATO MAINSTAYS IS DECLINING. SPAIN IN EXCELLENT POSITION ALSO BECAUSE TWO PREDOMINANT NATO POWERS, U.S. AND FRG, NOW CLEARLY WANT SPAIN TIED IN SOME WAY.

C. IN POLITICAL TERMS, SPAIN HAS BEGUN A TRANSITIONAL PHASE, WITH SOME LIBERALIZATION UNDERWAY AND WITH FRANCO'S DEPARTURE BECOMING CLOSER EVERY DAY. ACTUAL FORMATION OF POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS, THEIR POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION IN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS LATER THIS YEAR PLUS LOCAL GOVT REFORM SHOULD FURTHER IMPRESS OTHER EUROPEANS. WHILE SPAIN BELIEVES THESE FACTORS SHOULD MAKE SOME IMPRESSION ON OTHER EUROPEANS, SPANISH NEGOTIATORS HAVE NO ILLUSION THAT THIS IMPRESSION IS SHARED EQUALLY IN ALL COUNTRIES OR THAT SPAIN HAS ANY CHANCE OF NATO MEMBERSHIP.

D. FULL SECURITY GUARANTEE BY U.S. IS NOT FEASIBLE. BUT AT SAME TIME U.S. EFFORTS TO DATE TO BRING SPAIN CLOSER TO NATO HAVE NOT MATCHED ITS RHETORIC. U.S. CAN INFLUENCE OTHER NATO COUNTRIES TO ACCEPT AT LEAST CLOSER SPANISH TIES WITH NATO IF IT REALLY WANTS TO, BUT U.S. WILL NOT DO SO UNLESS SERIOUSLY PRESSED.

E. WITH FRANCO'S ERA DRAWING TO A CLOSE, RECOGNITION IN SOME FORM BY NATO OF SPAIN'S CONTRIBUTION TO WESTERN DEFENSE (WHILE FRANCO IS STILL ALIVE) WILL CONSTITUTE A FINAL "LAYING ON OF HANDS" IN NATO CONTEXT AND THIS IS THE TIME TO MAKE THIS FINAL EFFORT.

4. WE BELIEVE FOLLOWING ARE NOW IMPERATIVES, ROUGHLY IN ORDER OF PRIORITY, MOST STRONGLY FELT BY SPANISH NEGOTIATORS:

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A. WHATEVER MAY BE DEVELOPMENT OF TIES WITH EUROPE IN SHORT RUN, DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S. REMAINS SPAIN'S FUNDAMENTAL EXTERNAL LINK, BOTH FOR SECURITY AND FOR ACCESS TO WESTERN COMMUNITY, AND FOR TIME BEING MUST CONTINUE AT REASONABLY SATISFACTORY LEVEL.

B. PUBLIC OPINION, ESSENTIALLY OPINION OF KEY INTEREST GROUPS, HAS INCREASED REMARKABLY AS FACTOR IN PAST 18 MONTHS CONCOMITANTLY WITH POLITICIZATION OF SPANISH SOCIETY, AND GREATER FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN THE MEDIA. SPANISH NEGOTIATORS AWARE THAT, WHILE PUBLIC OPINION INVOKED IN PREVIOUS NEGOTIATIONS ON SOMEWHAT DUBIOUS GROUNDS, IT REALLY IS FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH NOW. PROPOSITION THAT SPAIN INADEQUATELY COMPENSATED FOR RISKS IT TAKES FOR WESTERN DEFENSE HAS TAKEN ROOT ACROSS POLITICAL SPECTRUM AND EVEN WITH MILITARY, AND NEWLY AGGRESSIVE MEDIA

AND MEMBERS OF INTELLIGENTISIA CONTINUE TO PLAY UP MULTIPLE
VARIATIONS OF THIS THEME. SPAIN OF COURSE REMAINS AUTHORITARIAN

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REGIME CAPABLE OF SIMPLY IMPOSING ANOTHER AGREEMENT ON PUBLIC,
HOWEVER UNPOPULAR. BUT CURRENT SENSITIVITY AMONG DECISION-
MAKERS TO OPINION IS SHARPENED BY PROSPECT THEY MAY BE CALLED
ON TO DEFEND THEIR ACTIONS IN MORE HOSTILE DOMESTIC POLITICAL
ENVIRONMENT. AT SAME TIME SPANISH INCLINED TO ASSUME THAT U.S.
ALSO TAKES THIS PUBLIC OPINION INTO ACCOUNT AND BELIEVES BETTER
AGREEMENT OBTAINABLE NOW WITH FRANCO THAN LATER WITHOUT HIM,
AND THAT WE THEREFORE MAY BE PLAYED FOR GREATER CONCESSIONS
IN INTEREST OF PROMPT AGREEMENT.

C. HAVING LOOKED PRIMARILY TO U.S. AS MAIN SOURCE OF SUPPORT
SINCE EARLY FIFTIES, SPANISH MILITARY CONTINUES TO REGARD
DEFENSE AGREEMENTS AS ESSENTIAL CONDUIT FOR SUPPORT AND
MODERNIZATION. THIS IS KEY FACTOR FAVORING CONTINUITY OF
DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS IN SOME FORM. NEGOTIATORS AWARE THAT AT
PRESENT ONLY U.S. AMONG WESTERN COUNTRIES HAS POTENTIAL FINANCIAL
RESOURCES, ARMS SOPHISTICAPTION AND POTENTIAL POLITICAL WILL
TO MATCH SPANISH ARMED FORCES AMBITIOUS MODERNIZATION PLANS.
WHATEVER OTHER POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, NEW AGREEMENT MUST
YIELD DEFENSIBLE RETURNS IN AREA OF MILITARY MODERNIZATION.
COUPLED WITH THIS IS GROWING PERCEPTION OF US MATERIEL QUID
AS "COMPENSATION" TO SPANISH MILITARY FOR U.S. ARMS SALES
TO MOROCCO.

5. WITH REFERENCE TO POSSIBLE DIVISIONS AMONG SPANISH

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NOGOTIATORS, IN FREQUENT CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBASSY AND DURING NEGOTIATIONS, SPANISH HAVE DISCUSSED ELABORATE STRATEGY IN WHICH OBJECTIVES OF MATERIEL QUID, FACILITIES AND SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, INCLUDING JOINT DEFENSE PLANNING, ARE INTERLINKED AND DESIGNED TO BE MUTUALLY COMPENSATING IN TERMS OF U.S. CONCESSIONS. IN FACT, HOWEVER, THESE AREAS RESPOND TO DIFFERENT IMPERATIVES AND DIFFERENT CONSTITUENCIES, THUS MAKING IT DIFFICULT FOR SPANISH TO MAINTAIN HOPED-FOR LINKAGE BETWEEN THEM CONSISTENTLY. IT IS OUR BELIEF THAT MILITARY AS WELL AS KEY FIGURES IN PRESIDENCY OF GOVERNMENT ATTACH GREATER PRIORITY TO SIZABLE QUID PACKAGE AS OFFSET TO RETENTION OF FACILITIES THAN THEY DO TO SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, INCLUDING NATO LINKAGE. FON MINISTRY, ON OTHER HADN, SEEMS MORE CONCERNED OVER EQUATION BETWEEN SECUTIY ARRANGEMENTS, I.E., NATO LINKAGE, AND MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES. FON MINISTRY ALSO APPARENTLY SEES FACILITIES ISSUE, PARTICULARLY PRESUMED NUCLEAR RISK OF TORREJON AND ROTA, AND HIGH VISIBILITY OF FORMER, AS PROBLEMS THAT REQUIRE ADJUSTMENT REGARDLESS OF OTHER TRADE-OFFS. HOW STRONGLY MILITARY REALLY FEELS ON FACILITIES ISSUE IS NOT YET ENTIRELY CLEAR, ALTHOUGH IT MUST BE RECALLED IT WAS MILITARY WHO PREPARED PAPER READ AT LAST SESSION OF FIFTH ROUND. WE SUSPECT THESE POLICY DIVISIONS WILL BECOME MORE EVIDENT AS BARGAINING GETS INTO SPECIFICS AND WILL FURTHER COMPLICATE NEGOTIATING PROCESS. THE WORD WHICH FON MINISTRY PASSES TO OTHER GOVERNMENTS IS THAT U.S. WILL BE GIVEN AMPLE TIME BEYOND SEPTEMBER TO SATISFY SPANISH REQUIREMENTS (PRESUMABLY IN QUID PACKAGE AND NATO LINKAGE), BUT FAILING THAT FACILITIES WILL BE REDUCED TO THOSE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO SPAIN. (OUTCOME OF GREEK NEGOTIATIONS PLUS WHATEVER HAPPENS ON AZORES AND IN TURKEY WILL CERTAINLY INFLUENCE SPANISH THINKING IN THIS REGARD.)

6. DIVISION AS WE NOW SEE IT IS THAT WHICH SEPARATES GOS AS A WHOLE (PRESIDENCY, HIGH GENERAL STAFF, FOREIGN MINISTRY) FROM MILITARY MINISTRIES. WHILE THEY HAVE APPEARED TO CLOSE RANKS DURING NEGOTIATIONS, INCREASING STRESS GUTIERREZ MELLADO PLACES ON QUID PACKAGE, INCLUDING REFERENCE TO GRANT ASSISTANCE DURING LAST NEGOTIATIONS ROUND, WOULD INDICATE THAT, AS NOTED ABOVE, MILITARY WANT TO PROTECT THEIR INTERESTS AND THIS INFLUENCE IS BEING INCREASINGLY INJECTED INTO SPANISH NEGOTIATING POSTURE. MOREOVER, IF WE WERE TO PLACE PRIORITIES ON SPECIFIC BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS, THE MATERIEL QUID PACKAGE --

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INCLUDING BOTH ARMS ACQUISITIONS AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS -- TAKES HEAVE PRECEDENCE OVER COMBINED STAFF. HOWEVER, IF LATTER WERE VISIBLY LINKED IN AT LEAST MILITARY WAY TO NATO, IN A WAY THAT SPANISH COULD EXPLOIT FOR DOMESTIC PUBLIC CONSUMPTION, THIS WOULD GIVE US SOME BARGAINING LEVERAGE TO IMPOSE MORE MODEST LIMITATIONS ON MAGNITUDE OF QUID.

7. IN LIGHT OF OUR READING OF BASIC SPANISH ASSUMPTIONS, WE BELIEVE THEY ARE STILL HOPEFUL THAT PRACTICAL LINKS WITH NATO MAY BE DEVELOPED, BUT THOSE HOPES MAY BE DAMPENED AS THEY RECEIVE THEIR OWN ASSESSMENT OF NATO ATTITUDE. THEY WILL CONTINUE TO LOOK TO US TO TAKE THE LEAD BOTH IN DEVELOPING MODALITIES FOR LINKAGE AND IN PERSUADING OTHER ALLIES THAT FAILURE TO ACHIEVE SUCH LINKAGE WILL RESULT IN LOSS OF MANY OF THESE FACILITIES. GREEK EXAMPLE WILL NOT BE LOST ON SPANISH. SPANISH VAGUENESS ABOUT MODALITIES OF LINKAGE MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO GAUGE WHAT SORT OF NATO GESTURE WOULD SUFFICE. OUR READING IS THAT ONE-TIME RHETORICAL BOW TO SPAIN IN HIGH LEVEL NATO DECLARATION MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE AS INTERIM GESTURE, IF THERE IS NO SATISFACTORY PROGRESS ON NATO LINKAGE. HOWEVER, BOTH FROM GENERAL POLICY POINT OF VIEW AND FOR FAVORABLE OUTCOME OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WE SHOULD WORK FOR SOME PRACTICAL MILITARY LINKS. WE SHOULD NEVERTHELESS EXPECT TO PAY IN SOME WAY IN TERMS OF FACILITIES WHETHER OR NOT SATISFACTORY NATO RESPONSE IS ACHIEVED, THOUGH GOS WILL PROBABLY NOT MAKE VAGUE DISTINCTION BETWEEN NATO AND NON-NATO RELATED FACILITIES A PRIMARY CRITERION. PRICE WE WILL BE EXPECTED TO PAY WILL BE IN DIRECT PROPORTION TO SATISFACTION GOS RECEIVES ON QUID PACKAGE AND ON NATO RESPONSE.

8. REGARDING FACILITIES, TORREJON AND NUCLEAR PRESENCE AT ROTA, IN ALL FORMS, HAVE BEEN MAIN SPANISH CONCERNS ALL ALONG THAT WE EXPECT WILL REQUIRE SOME ACCOMMODATION. HOWEVER, ROVIERA TOOK PAINS TO NOTE AND IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION TO REPEAT SPAIN'S POSITION WAS NEGOTIABLE AND FAR FROM FINAL, AS DID PRIME MINISTER ARIAS IN CONVERSATION WITH U.S. SENATORS. ALTHOUGH CORTINA HAS LINKED FACILITIES TO SOME NATO RECOGNITION, IT IS ISSUE THAT RESPONDS IN PART TO SEPARATE IMPERATIVES OF PUBLIC OPINION. THEREFORE, WE CANNOT RULE OUT BEING PRESSED FOR SOME ADJUSTMENT, SUCH AS, AT THE LEAST, PRESENCE OF TANKERS AT TORREJON, AND REDUCTION OF NUCLEAR PRESENCE AT ROTA, WITH
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OR WITHOUT PROGRESS IN NATO. BUT EVEN IN WORST CASE, SUCH AS COMPLETE FAILURE ON NATO LINKAGE, WE BELIEVE SPANISH WOULD SEEK TO REDUCE FACILITIES IN MANNER WHICH WOULD BE OF LEAST COST POSSIBLE TO US IN DEFENSE READINESS BUT STILL SATISFYING PUBLIC OPINION. FOR EXAMPLE, EXTENDED PHASE-OUT PERIOD AT TORREJON ON PERHAPS SSBN'S 16 AT ROTA MIGHT PROVIDE NECESSARY

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GESTURE TO PUBLIC WHILE ALLOWING U.S. TO FURTHER AMORTIZE INVESTMENT AND TO DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE FACILITIES. AT SAME TIME WE NOTE THAT SPANISH WERE CAREFUL TO SUGGEST "STANDBY" STATUS FOR TORREJON RATHER THAN COMPLETE DEACTIVATION. WHILE IN FIRST INSTANCE THIS MIGHT SEEM POSITIVE GESTURE, IT IS PROBABLY MORE TO PROTECT INTERESTS OF SAF WHICH OTHERWISE WOULD BE SADDLED WITH TOTAL OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE COSTS OF BASE. WE BELIEVE THAT IN THEIR FINAL POSITION, SPANISH MAY PREFER REDUCTION OF OUR PRESENCE TO TOTAL DEACTIVATION, AT LEAST FOR THE PRESENT. DEPARTMENT THEREFORE MAY WISH TO EXPLORE THIS POSSIBILITY IN FUTURE SESSIONS.

9. IN VIEW OF DIZZYING RISE IN COST OF MILITARY GOODS, BELIEVE WE CAN SAFELY DISCOUNT PREVIOUS RHETORIC ABOUT SPAIN "PAYING ITS WAY" AND ANTICIPATE SPANISH WILL PUSH FOR LARGEST MATERIEL QUID PACKAGE OBTAINABLE, TO INCLUDE SOME GRANTS, PERHAPS FOR TRAINING, EXTENSIVE LOANS FOR PURCHASE OF MILITARY HARDWARE, INCLUDING F-4E'S: AND SALE OF SURPLUS EQUIPMENT. SPANISH HAVE PLACED CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS ON OBTAINING MOST MODERN EQUIPMENT POSSIBLE SINCE THEIR PERCEPTION, RIGHT OR WRONG, OF INADEQUATE EQUIPMENT RECEIVED UNDER PREVIOUS AGREEMENT REMAINS AN IRRITANT. RECENT HISTORY OF LATEST ABORTED ATTEMPT TO PURCHASE NEW F-4E'S INDICATES SOME DIVISION BETWEEN MILITARY MINISTRIES AND REST OF GOVT, IN THIS CASE, THE AIR MINISTRY, WHICH, DESPITE ITS INTENTION TO GO THROUGH WITH THE PURCHASE,

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WAS EFFECTIVELY OVERRULED. WE BELIEVE PRESSURES ON MILITARY NEGOTIATORS TO WHICH MFA OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN REFERRING PROBABLY REPRESENTS EFFORT ON PART OF MILITARY MINISTRIES AND SERVICE STAFFS TO STAY IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE NEGOTIATORS AND ENSURE THEIR INTERESTS -- WHICH WE BELIEVE ARE MAINLY ACQUISITION OF MILITARY HARDWARE -- ARE SAFEGUARDED. IN SHORT, OF PARAMOUNT INTEREST TO SPANISH MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT IS SO-CALLED MODERNIZATION, PRINCIPALLY MATERIEL ACQUISITIONS AND U.S. CONTRIBUTION TO SPAIN'S ABILITY TO PRODUCE ITS OWN HARDWARE IN THAT ORDER OF PRIORITY. WE CANNOT ESTIMATE ULTIMATE MAGNITUDE, AND WHILE SPAIN MAY WELL TABLE OUTRAGEOUS DEMANDS AS IT DID IN 1968, POSSIBILITY GOS WANTS TO INCLUDE 24 F-4E'S GIVES SOME INDICATION OF TYPE OF MATERIEL SPAIN MAY SEEK IN QUID PACKAGE. WE HAVE, OF COURSE, REMINDED HIGH LEVELS OF GOS THAT REPETITION OF 1968 DEMANDS WILL HARDLY CONTRIBUTE TO SMOOTH COURSE OF NEGOTIATIONS.

10. COMBINED MILITARY PLANNING STAFF AS SUCH IS NOT OF MAJOR INTEREST TO SPANISH AND WOULD ONLY BE REGARDED AS COMESTIC GESTURE WITH NO INTRINSIC VALUE. A COMBINED STAFF THAT HAD DEFINITE WARTIME ROLE TO PLAY, AND WHICH -- LIKE SACEUR -- WOULD HAVE EARMARKED FORCES THAT WOULD CONVERT TO ITS COMMAND IN TIME OF WAR WOULD BE OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS NOT VITAL AND WOULD PROBABLY BE REGARDED AS AN EXTRA CONCESSION AND NOT AS TRADE-OFF FOR PROSPECTIVE MATERIEL QUID SUCH AS ASSISTED MILITARY PURCHASES AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER. COMBINED STAFF WOULD HAVE ITS GREATEST POTENTIAL VALUE TO SPANISH FOR USE AS SEDATIVE TO PUBLIC OPINION IN EVENT MORE SUBSTANTIAL FORM OF SECURITY ARRANGEMENT CANNOT BE WORKED OUT. IN THAT CASE, SPANISH WOULD DO ALL POSSIBLE TO REPRESENT COMBINED STAFF TO PUBLIC -- PERHAPS WITH SPANISH OFFICER IN COMMAND -- AS FULL FLEDGED LINKAGE TO WESTERN SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, THOUGH THEY THEMSELVES, FROM PAST EXPERIENCE, WOULD VALUE IT FOR PURPOSES OF QUID AS LARGELY COMESTIC CONCESSION.

11. IN RECENT PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH ARIAS, ROVIRA, PERINAT, AND OTHERS, WE CONTINUE TO GET THE IMPRESSION THAT SPANISH ARE SEARCHING FOR FORMULAS AND ARE HOPING WE CAN HELP THEM DEFINE WHAT IS POSSIBLE AND ACHIEVE SOME PROGRESS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THEIR GENERAL POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. AT SAME TIME, HOWEVER, THEY SEEM TO TAKE PAINS TO STRESS THAT

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SPANISH POSITION IS FLEXIBLE AND THAT THEY WANT US TO MAKE SOME

KIND OF FIRM PROPOSALS. CONCLUSION IS, THEREFORE, THAT THEY WANT NEGOTIATIONS TO SUCCEED AND HENCE ACHIEVE NEW AGREEMENT: THEY ARE NOT COMMITTED TO ANY DRASTIC AND IMMEDIATE REDUCTION OF U.S. PRESENCE, BUT ARE COMMITTED TO ADJUSTMENTS IN SENSITIVE AREAS: AND THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR MAXIMUM POSSIBLE ACHIEVEMENT IN POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. AS FOR AFOSI REPORT FROM TORREJON, WE HAVE NO INDICATIONS THAT FRANCO HAS PASSED WORD TO SOFTEN SPANISH POSITION. MOREOVER, WE ARE NOT CERTAIN THAT GIVEN IMPERATIVES FELT BY SPANISH, INCLUDING PUBLIC OPINION, A MERE WORD BY FRANCO WOULD STILL HAVE THE SAME EFFECT IT HAD LAST TIME. OBVIOUSLY, IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT WE ACHIEVED A "LAYING OF HANDS" BY NATO, SPANISH POSITION WOULD UNDERGO CONSIDERABLE SOFTENING.

12. WHILE NON-MILITARY ASPECTS OF NEW AGREEMENT WILL ASSUME SOME IMPORTANCE IN LATER STAGES OF NEGOTIATIONS, WE BELIEVE THEY ARE OF TERTIARY CONSIDERATION NOW AND WILL REMAIN SO UNTIL SOME OF BASIC ISSUES OF NEW AGREEMENT HAVE BEEN RESOLVED.

13. SEPTTEL WILL PROVIDE ASSESSMENT RELATIVE IMPORTANCE TO SPANISH OF ITEMS LISTED MADRID 2650.
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